

NO to HB 5263

Dear Sir/Madam,

I deeply oppose HB 5263; the slaughter of rabbits for food consumption. Please vote against it.

There are no regulations or inspections in place to protect rabbits from the abject cruelty that will be inflicted on them before and during slaughter. This is because they are not classed as livestock. As a prey specie, forcing them to live in barren cages with nowhere to hide in disgraceful, causing major stress to these gentle brings.

When they are killed, they are often fully conscious. In a poor attempt to knock them out, the blunt edge of a knife is the best they can hope for. Their legs are broken to force them into shackles where they then have their throats slit. They feel every bit of this painful treatment. If you have ever heard a rabbit scream, you will never forget it.

We do not need to farm yet another species that is so vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. In my view, rabbits should be classed as pets and should be afforded the same protections as all companion animals, not stuffed into factory farms (which is what HB 5263 will promote on a huge scale), to be brutally killed.

Housing rabbits at such high densities creates a multitude of environmental impacts. In addition to the leaching of waste, the dust created by factory farming will contain a potent mixture of aerosolised feces, rabbit dander, mites, bacteria, fungal spores, mycotoxins, endotoxins, veterinary medicines, pesticides, ammonia, and hydrogen sulfide.

Factory farming minimizes the space allocated to the animals; to the extent that they suffer immensely; whilst also maximizing deforestation in places such as Brazil and Malaysia, through the use of huge quantities of cheap, unsustainable soya and palm oil in their feed.

Another risk of rabbit farming is that it can potentially expose our beloved New England cottontail, eastern cottontail, and snowshoe hare to RHDV2. Do we really want to see this highly contagious disease decimate wild rabbit and hare populations?

Please show some compassion. Think about the gentle being that has probably been bought for your children, due to their lovely temperament. These rabbits are the same. Imagine the horrendous existence they would have in these factory farms. Please oppose HB 5263.

Sincerely,

Linda Reilly
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